

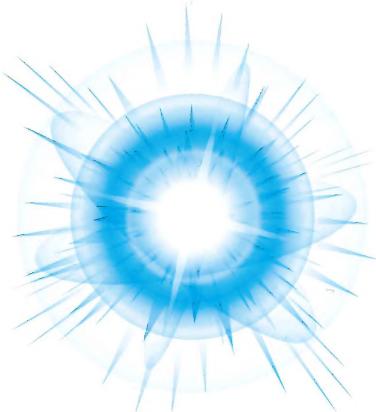
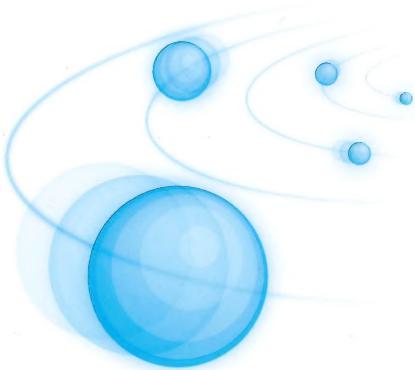
# ESPRIT ORCHESTRA

## 2018-2019 Season

Alex Pauk, Founding Music Director & Conductor

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**2018-2019 SEASON AT A GLANCE  
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**Wednesday October 24, 2018**

# **FOR ORBITING SPHERES**

**Missy Mazzoli** (U.S.A.)

*Sinfonia (for Orbiting Spheres)* (2016)\*

**Unsuk Chin** (Korea)

*Chorós Chordón* (2017)\*

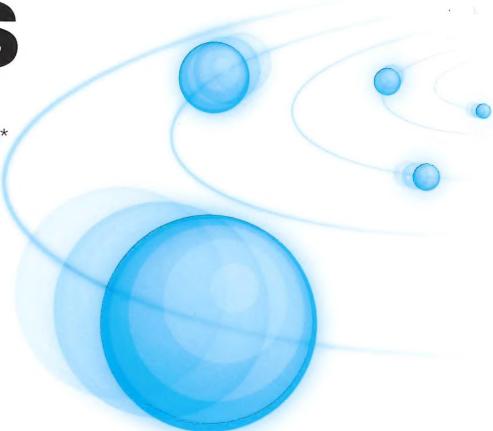
**Charles Ives** (U.S.A.)

*The Unanswered Question* (1908)

**Tristan Keuris** (The Netherlands)

*Sinfonia* (1974)

**Alex Pauk** – conductor



**Wednesday November 28, 2018**

# **NORTH/WHITE**

**Anna Thorvaldsdóttir** (Iceland)

*Dreaming* (2008)\*

**Alexina Louie** (Canada)

*Take the Dog Sled* (2008)

**R. Murray Schafer** (Canada)

*North/White* (1973)

**Alex Pauk** – conductor

**Evie Mark and Akinisie Sivuarapik** – Inuit throat singers



Season Sponsor



Sunday January 20, 2019

# CONSTELLATIONS

**Toshio Hosokawa** (Japan)

**Concerto for Saxophone and Orchestra** (1999)\*

**Alison Yun-Fei Jiang** (Canada)

**River Memory** (2018)

**Claude Vivier** (Canada)

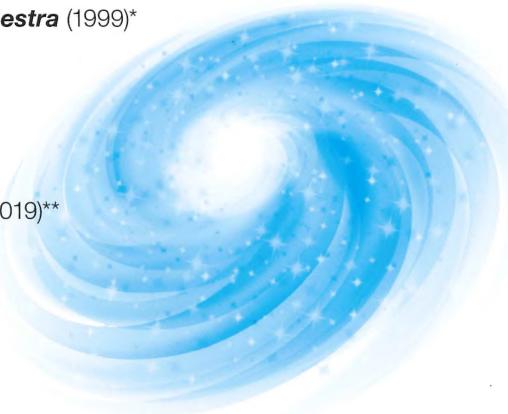
**Orion** (1979)

**Christopher Goddard** (Canada)

**Les tringles des sistres tintaitent** (2019)\*\*

**Alex Pauk** – conductor

**Wallace Halladay** – saxophone



Sunday March 24, 2019

# GRAND SLAM!

**Christopher Thornborrow** (Canada)

**Trompe l'œil** (2019)\*\*

**Maki Ishii** (Japan)

**Afro-Concerto** (1982)

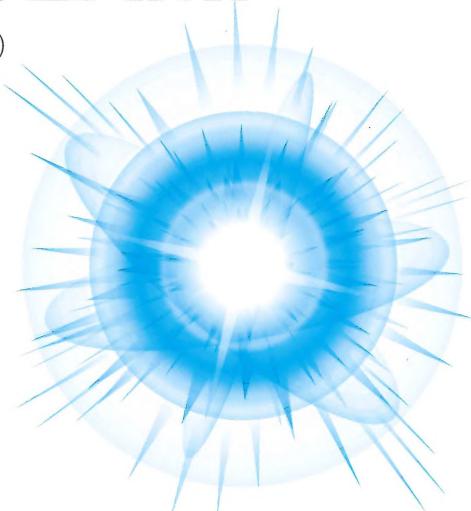
**Unsuk Chin** (Korea)

**Cello Concerto** (2006; rev. 2013)\*

**Alex Pauk** – conductor

**Ryan Scott** – percussion

**Joseph Johnson** – cello





## A PALETTE OF BEAUTIFUL MUSIC

This season I'm continuing my practice of focusing on music by exceptional composers from abroad by playing as many of their large orchestral works as feasible over several seasons to provide a comprehensive profile of their work. Some will recall that I've done this with Adès, Dalbavie, McPhee, Ishii, etc. I'm now in the midst of such a cycle with Unsuk Chin's music. Two of her pieces (very different from each other) appear – one at the start of the season, the other near the end, so an expanded grasp of her outstanding musical imagination can be had. I've done this with many Canadian composers through commissioning and programming – the name of the game with Esprit since it was founded.

Such programming fosters relationship building amongst the composers, the orchestra, and the audience. This deepens understanding, extends communication, and is central in the commissioning of composers and engagement of guest artists. Christopher Goddard, whose music thrilled us last season, has been commissioned along with other emerging composers, some of whom we commissioned for last season's *Ontario Resonance* project, which also involved them as mentors in our *Creative Sparks* mentoring program for high school students. These young composers, plus several rising talents new to Esprit, have been commissioned for a revival of Esprit's *New Wave Festival* in April.



I'm pleased to have found wonderful music by composers from abroad (Missy Mazzoli, Anna Thorvaldsdottir, Toshio Hosokawa) who are being performed by Esprit for the first time and I've included pieces with special resonance that we've performed in past seasons. All guest artists have shone with Esprit in previous seasons.

Esprit is privileged to have been chosen to open and close two festivals of contemporary music! Our January concert is both the finale of the 21C Festival as well as the opener for the University of Toronto New Music Festival.

There you have it – my point of view in creating a palette of beautiful music for your exploration, adventure, and discovery. Enjoy your listening!

Sincerely,

Alex Pauk, C.M.  
Music Director

# **Wednesday October 24 2018**

**8:00pm Concert  
7:15pm Pre-Concert Chat  
Koerner Hall**

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416 408 0208**

**Missy Mazzoli (U.S.A.)**

***Sinfonia (for Orbiting Spheres)* (2016)\***

**Unsuk Chin (Korea)**

***Chorós Chordón* (2017)\***

**Charles Ives (U.S.A.)**

***The Unanswered Question* (1908)**

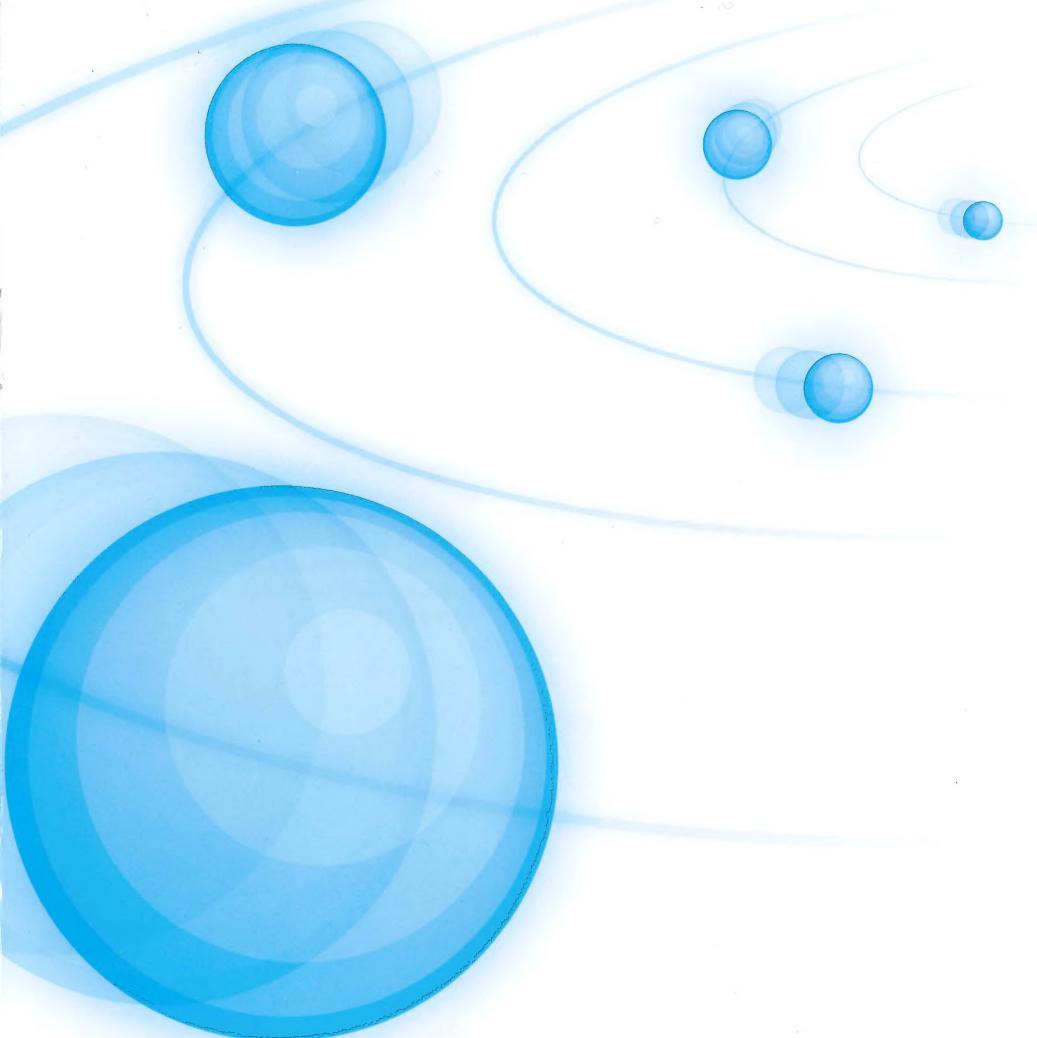
**Tristan Keuris (The Netherlands)**

***Sinfonia* (1974)**

**Alex Pauk – conductor**

\*Canadian Premiere

**FOR  
ORBITING  
SPHERES**



# NG ES

Mazzoli's *Sinfonia*, cast "in the shape of a solar system", weaves and coils itself in pulsing loops that twist around each other within a larger orbit while the *Sinfonia* of Keuris is simply a work of utmost charm and pleasurable musical invention.

Chin's celestial "dance of the strings" extends to the full orchestra and offers musical reflections on natural phenomena and our physical relationship with the cosmos.

Ives' work remains one of the greatest ever pieces expressing awe and wonder about the cosmos.

# NORTH

**Wednesday  
November 28  
2018**

8:00pm Concert  
7:15pm Pre-Concert Chat  
Koerner Hall  
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**Anna Thorvaldsdottir** (Iceland)  
*Dreaming* (2008)\*

**Alexina Louie** (Canada)  
*Take the Dog Sled* (2008)

**R. Murray Schafer** (Canada)  
*North/White* (1973)

**Alex Pauk** – conductor  
**Evie Mark and Akinisie Sivuarapik** – Inuit throat singers

\*Canadian Premiere

In *North/White*, a snowmobile in the percussion section is counterbalanced by Schafer's sonic portrayal of the mythic, splendid, indestructible idea of North – spacious, pure, temptationless.

Louie's *Take the Dog Sled* captures the joy, tenderness and energy of life in the North, the mystical quality of the land and the humour of the Inuit through its embrace of original throat songs by a Western instrumental ensemble.

Thorvaldsdottir's *Dreaming*, a refined, meditative, richly detailed musical embroidery, is like a mysterious shifting landscape bringing time to a halt – like in dreams.

# WHITE



**Sunday  
January 20  
2019**

8:00pm Concert  
7:15pm Pre-Concert Chat  
Koerner Hall  
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**CONSTELLATION**

**Toshio Hosokawa** (Japan)  
**Concerto for Saxophone and Orchestra** (1999)\*

**Alison Yun-Fei Jiang** (Canada)  
**River Memory** (2018)

**Claude Vivier** (Canada)  
**Orion** (1979)

**Christopher Goddard** (Canada)  
**Les tringles des sistres tinttaient** (2019)\*\*

**Alex Pauk** – conductor  
**Wallace Halladay** – saxophone

\*Canadian Premiere

\*\*World Premiere commissioned by Esprit with generous support from the Koerner Foundation

Part of the Royal Conservatory's 21C Music Festival,  
as well as the University of Toronto New Music Festival.



Toshio Hosokawa is the Roger D. Moore Distinguished Visitor for Composition in the University of Toronto New Music Festival

Goddard's beguiling new work re-imagines the spellbinding gypsy song that opens act two of Bizet's *Carmen* with its fluidity, exoticism and perpetual forward energy.

The astounding virtuosity of saxophonist Wallace Halladay reveals the full extent of visiting Japanese guest composer Hosokawa's exquisite creativity.

*Orion*, this concert's touchstone, is perhaps the most vivid expression of Vivier's musical state of "eternal homecoming".

In *River Memory*, Jiang, inspired by Niagara Falls, contemplates the transformation of her mixed cultural identity as an immigrant, through time, art making and the Canadian experience.

# LLATIONS

# GRAND SLAM!



**Christopher Thornborrow** (Canada)

*Trompe l'œil* (2019)\*\*

**Maki Ishii** (Japan)

*Afro-Concerto* (1982)

**Unsuk Chin** (Korea)

*Cello Concerto* (2006; rev. 2013)\*

**Alex Pauk** – conductor

**Ryan Scott** – percussion

**Joseph Johnson** – cello

\*Canadian Premiere

\*\*World Premiere commissioned by Esprit with generous support from the **Ontario Arts Council**

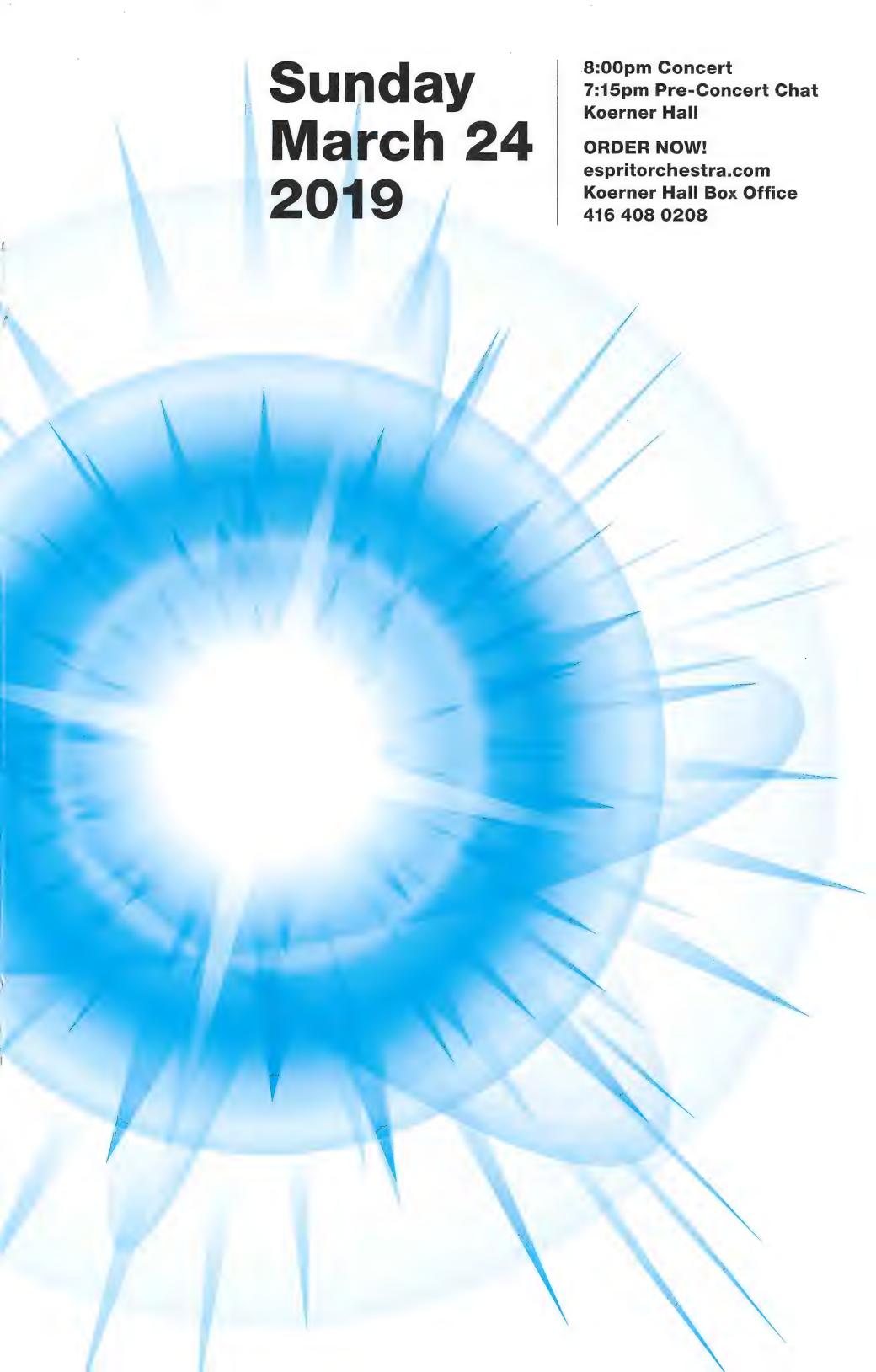
A powerful work for percussion and orchestra, Ishii's *Afro-Concerto*, mixing cultural inflections, provides the impetus for this concert and is a spectacular musical blast for our season finale.

Thornborrow's piece attests to Esprit's promise of building strong relationships with composers resulting in impressive works for our stage.

Exploring the cello's lyric qualities, in spite of its astounding technical difficulties, Chin's concerto will cast a spell over everyone with its floating, dream-like sequences, flickering impulses of musical lightening, frenetic and at times motoric drive, long-spun melodies, as well as orchestral accompaniments be they aggressive explosions of colour or delicate accompanying auras. Ultimately the soloist takes us floating into the stratosphere at the end.

# Sunday March 24 2019

8:00pm Concert  
7:15pm Pre-Concert Chat  
Koerner Hall  
**ORDER NOW!**  
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Koerner Hall Box Office  
416 408 0208



# NEW WAVE

## Free to all subscribers

**April 5  
2019**

**7:30pm  
Jeanne Lamon Hall  
at Trinity St. Paul's Centre  
427 Bloor Street West**

**Eugene Astapov** (Canada)  
*New Work* (2019)\*

**Maria Atallah** (Canada)  
*New Work* (2019)\*\*

**Quinn Jacobs** (Canada)  
*New Work* (2019)\*\*

**Bekah Simms** (Canada)  
*Cello Concerto* (2019)\*

**Christina Volpini** (Canada)  
*New Work* (2019)\*

**Alison Yun-Fei Jiang** (Canada)  
*New Work* (2019)\*\*

**Alex Pauk** – conductor

**John Rea** – keynote speaker

**Eugene Astapov** – guest conductor

**Alison Yun-Fei Jiang** – guest conductor

**Amahl Arulanandam** – cello

\*World Premiere commissioned by Esprit with generous support from the **Ontario Arts Council**

\*\*World Premiere commissioned by Esprit Orchestra

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## A Concert of Premieres

More and more exceptional young Canadian composers are cropping up every day and our New Wave Festival aims to select the best of them and showcase their most up-to-date musical thoughts through Esprit-commissioned pieces. These works provide foundations for fresh, new creative directions or solidify concepts these rising-star composers are already working on. Not only does Esprit take pleasure in helping composers at the early stages of significant careers but looks forward to maintaining strong links with them over the years to come – links that have their beginnings in tonight's concert.

We're very pleased to welcome back John Rea as the festival's keynote speaker. In earlier festivals his provocative, resonant thoughts gave audiences much to think about in terms of where we are in the world's socio-cultural spectrum. We anticipate nothing less on this occasion.

# E REPRISE



## Ticketing

Ticketing will be handled through the Esprit office. Single ticket information and further program details will be available closer to the festival start date. Stay tuned on our website for more information!

[espritorchestra.com](http://espritorchestra.com) | 416-815-7887

*"I loved watching the interaction between the music pieces of music right out of the air. It was like energy."*



## Subscribe Today to reserve the best seats and save 20%!

In addition to the Koerner Hall concerts, subscribers are entitled to FREE ADMISSION for the New Wave Reprise Concert—that's 5 concerts for the price of 3!

### To subscribe:

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273 Bloor Street West, Toronto, ON M5S 1W2  
416 408 0208  
[espirorchestra.com](http://espirorchestra.com)

### Box Office Hours:

Monday – Friday	10am-6pm
Saturday	12pm-6pm
Sunday/Holidays	3 hours prior to performance

*icians, and the conductor seemed to be pulling energy flying all over the place. Absolute magic!"*

— Audience Member



Photo by Malcom Cook

## Subscription Prices

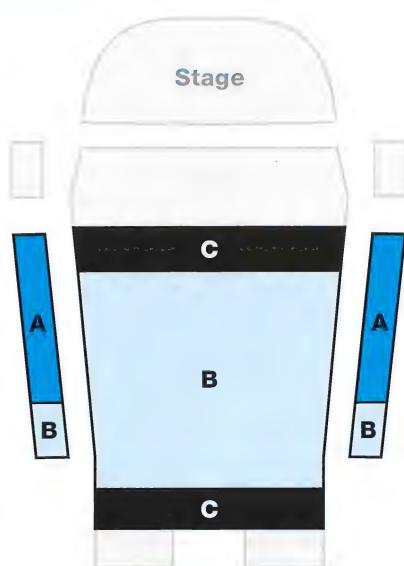
(Prices included all taxes and RCM box office fees)

	A	B	C
Adult Regular	\$210	\$175	\$145
Senior 65+	\$190	\$160	\$145
Under 30	\$115	\$105	\$85

**A** Parterre AB 1-12

**B** Parterre AB 13-16 / Orchestra Level E-Q

**C** Orchestra Level C, D, R, S





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## **ENHANCE YOUR CONCERT EXPERIENCE**

**Looking for an opportunity to engage with the artists featured in our concerts?**

**Esprit hosts Pre-Concert Chats in Koerner Hall immediately before every concert. Each discussion is hosted by Juno award-winning Canadian composer Alexina Louie. Learn what to listen for in each piece, and gain insight into the creative process of the artists.**

**All Pre-Concert Chats are free with your ticket purchase and start at 7:15pm – 45 minutes before show time.**

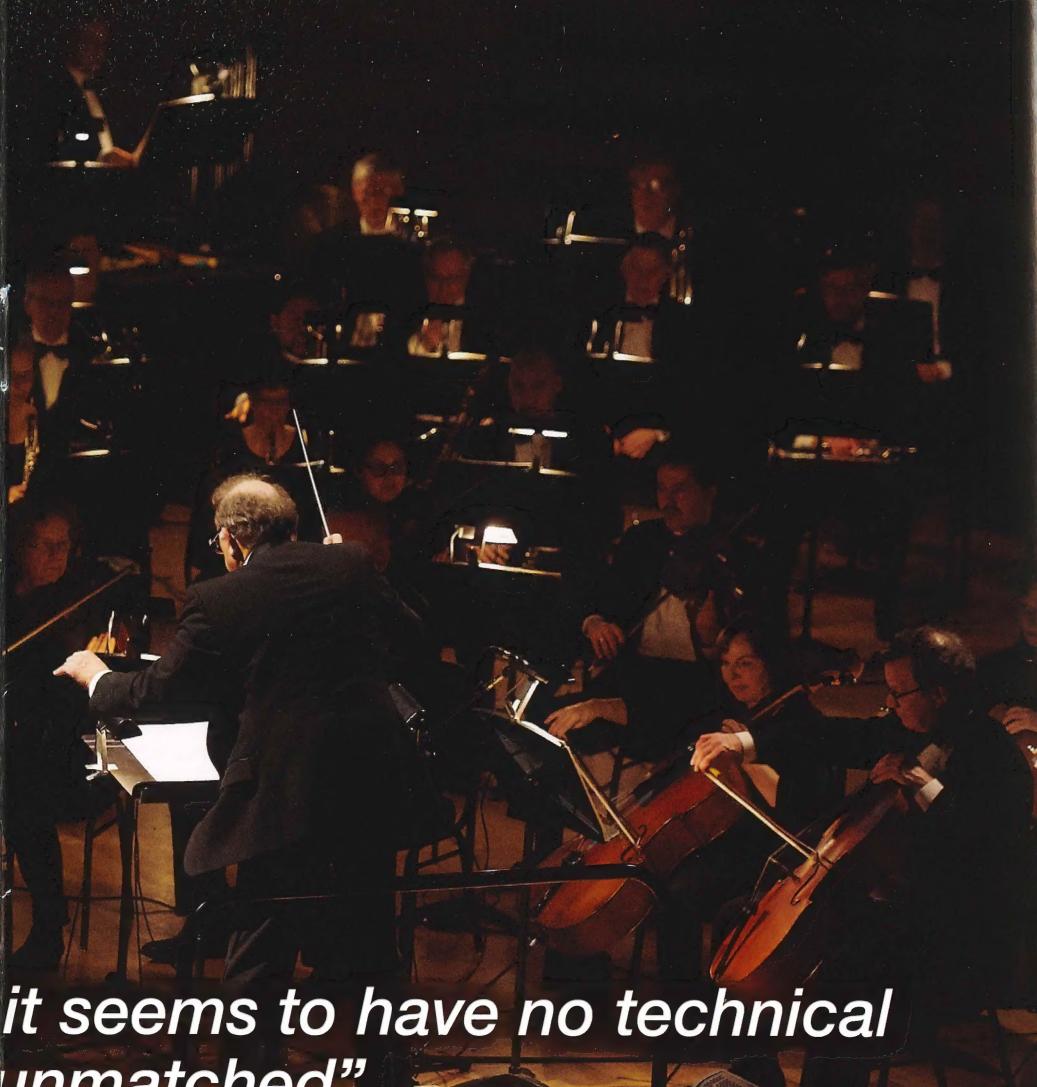
Photo by Malcolm Cook





***"The orchestra is like a Ferrari—  
limits and the level of playing is***

**We need your financial  
support to help Esprit achieve  
all of its goals.**



*it seems to have no technical  
unmatched”*

— Doug Schmidt, Composer

Photo by Malcolm Cook

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# While celebrating our 35th year, we heard from some of our composers – here's a sampling of what they had to say!

"The Toronto Esprit Orchestra is a national treasure and is unique in its own right. I have not encountered another orchestra on the planet that is like it. Esprit is special. It is what the world is at this point in time. Alex is uncompromising with his vision and programming of current top quality and innovative music and constantly is commissioning new works from composers. The orchestra is like a Ferrari, it seems to have no technical limits and the level of playing is unmatched, featuring some of the best players in the country. I have been very fortunate to have performances of my music by Esprit. The playing and interpretation consistently transcends by far my original ideas and I do not feel that my music is competing with other traditions in the same program. I believe that Alex has done more to promote composers and current modern music than anyone I have personally met. We are very fortunate to have such an ensemble that offers such a rich identity to Canadian culture."

— Doug Schmidt, Composer

"The very first required reading of my undergraduate degree was a compilation of interviews with living Canadian composers. As a 17-year-old just beginning to explore contemporary music, the artistic ideas that arose in these interviews were intriguing and far beyond the usual concepts I encountered. I read about projects of composers R. Murray Schaefer, Chris Paul Harman, Paul Frehner, Michael Colgrass, John Rea, and Alexina Louie, who was also the first living female composer I had ever encountered. My musical introduction to the works of these and many other Canadian composers came through the performances and recordings of Alex Pauk and Esprit Orchestra.

The orchestra has made an important contribution to the Canadian cultural landscape, acting as a place for Canadian composers to create authentic and substantial works with significant musical forces. The expertise and knowledge that Alex Pauk and the musicians bring to each work ensure compelling interpretations that composers are proud to share with audiences. The recent premiere of my work by Esprit Orchestra and my involvement in the orchestra's outreach program seem like coming full circle. It was a significant moment in my compositional career to have a work performed by Esprit, and I am also thrilled to have the opportunity to share Canadian music with the next generation of young artists."

— Christina Volpini, Composer

"There are many things that could be said about Esprit, its history, and the part it has played in Canadian cultural life. Of course, the numerous commissions and premieres have been central to its mission, as has championing Canadian work alongside exciting and innovative music from around the world, and Alex's activity as a mentor of soloists, performers and conductors has been no less significant a boon to Canadian music. As an emerging composer, I benefited from the vision and generosity of Alex and Esprit, who almost unbelievably were prepared to gamble time, money, and their audience's ears on an unproven new composer and work. They gave me my first performance by an established orchestra, and it was an honour to be part of Esprit's 35th anniversary season all these years later.

I could go on with such examples, but surely the most astonishing thing about Esprit must be that it exists at all. The establishment of a new orchestra devoted to the renewal and growth of the repertoire, and the fact that it's still going strong decades later, stands as a rare and invaluable accomplishment. As a Canadian ex-pat I can tell you that Esprit is viewed enviously by musical communities around the world.

Happy 35th Esprit and Alex, and many more to come!"

— Scott Wilson, Composer

"It is hard to imagine Canadian new music without the presence of Esprit Orchestra's activism. Esprit has played a seminal role in my career as composer, and has provided opportunities to feature my work in ways that would have been unimaginable to me 10 years ago. In 2011, when Alex approached me to be involved in the New Wave Composers Festival, I was thrilled to come to Toronto. Little did I know that this would not be a one-off event, but rather the beginning of a long-term, fruitful, musical collaboration. From this initial presentation of one of my chamber pieces, continued others, as well as the programming of not one but three of my orchestra pieces (some with repeat performances), including the commission and premiere of *Serifiniana*, for amplified violin and harp, orchestra and electronics (this is pretty unheard of for a young composer!) I have utmost respect for Alex's vision of this kind of ongoing support. Composers have the chance to grow and take risks, the musicians begin to trust the composer and understand their musical language, and with repeat exposure, audience members begin to see composers as multidimensional artists, developing a curiosity for the nuances of their individual style and observing their musical evolution over time. Rather than only playing premieres and then moving on to newer, shinier projects, by presenting multiple works by an artist over several seasons, Alex has curated a rare programming tactic that allows us all to delve deeper into the music and build community.

On a more personal note, Alex and Alexina have also served as a model composer couple: they are passionate, supportive of one another, open-minded, active, down-to-earth, inspiring, always learning, and totally devoted to their vocations in music. They have forged an impressive legacy not just for themselves, but for generations of artists and listeners in Canada. Happy 35th anniversary Esprit; we are so fortunate to have been blessed by your presence and perseverance!"

— Zoshi Di Castri, Composer

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